

# NHS NATIONAL CANCER DIRECTOR LAUNCHES NEW SOFTWARE TOOL TO IMPROVE CANCER TREATMENT IN THE UK

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Concentra has been central in the creation of ways to improve national cancer treatment and meet government targets for delivery of world class cancer care in the UK

London, 18 March 2009: The NHS has announced the launch of The Cancer Commissioning Tool (CCT), built by business consulting and technology services company Concentra (<http://www.concentra.co.uk/>), a key weapon in its fight against cancer.

The CCT will help NHS managers, specialists in public health, senior staff within networks and clinicians develop better cancer-fighting strategies at a local level, based on national data and standards. Around 2,500 NHS staff are expected to use the Toolkit, with more to follow.

The CCT brings together vital work that had previously only been available in piecemeal fashion to managers on a regional basis, thus giving the health service a much more comprehensive view of cancer across England. It also contributes to greater NHS efficiency, as it allows important activities like checking costs of new medicines to be done just once, which also means greater consistency across the country.

The main impetus behind the CCT was the need to help cancer networks and Trusts better commission cancer services in line with the government's vision for 'World Class Commissioning', the latter being the official NHS term for the planning and purchasing of healthcare solutions.

The NHS has already identified the Toolkit as a key weapon in its fight against cancer. "I am convinced a lot of positive results will flow from the CCT," says Richard Hancox, Associate Director of Commissioning at the National Cancer Action Team. "I also foresee that the success of the CCT can be built upon in other disease areas in the NHS."

The Cancer Commissioning Toolkit works by helping local cancer networks obtain the fullest picture on all the most promising new cancer treatments, benchmark their performance and share vital information with other parts of the NHS. The main users are managers in Primary Care Trusts, who will use it to better plan their local cancer treatment strategies, working to national guidelines as outlined in the NHS' Cancer Reform Strategy, with the ongoing aim of improving the UK's cancer treatment record.

Until recently, while a lot of data on the success of individual cancer drugs and treatments and other useful information such as cancer service quality indicators such as waiting times etc. was available, it was held in multiple locations, including 10 separate databases, and often in a paper-only format. The CCT effectively ends that situation and brings all the information into one easily-accessible location for clinicians.

"The launch of CCT is a notable achievement for the NHS, as well as the large number of stakeholders involved," says Rupert Morrison, Managing Director of the award-winning and rapidly-growing business consulting and technology services company that built the system, London-based Concentra

(<http://www.concentra.co.uk/>).

The design, development and roll-out of CCT was completed in a ground-breaking six months. Usability testing formed a key aspect in the project, as the tool had to be easy-to-use and intuitive. Also core to this approach was a set of formal “train the trainer” sessions to promote rapid take-up, and, in addition, ten regional CCT roll-out events have been supported by the company. Over 200 people have been trained with the addition of 700 briefed through co-regional launch events.

The CCT project interlinks with another major cancer response NHS project also developed by Concentra, the C-PORT (Chemotherapy Planning Oncology Resource Tool). C-PORT has been recognised as a major contributor to the NHS being able to support a nationally standardised way of evaluating the impact of new cancer drugs, as well as better utilise resources, plan and change working practices. C-PORT's development involved teamwork between the NHS, a number of pharmaceutical companies and Concentra, lead technology partner.

“We are committed to both helping the NHS manage its long-term goals and work closely with the NHS cancer bodies to extend and enhance these system so as that benefits are realised and in order to derive maximum lasting value,” concludes Morrison.

Professor Mike Richard, National Cancer Director comments, “The Cancer Reform Strategy identified better information and stronger commissioning as two of the key drivers to achieve our goal that cancer services in this country should be amongst the best in the world. The launch of this Cancer Commissioning Toolkit represents a major step forward in relation to both of these drivers for quality improvement.”

“Partnership working has been critical to the development of this toolkit and Concentra’s commitment to this project and to ensuring that benefits are realised and in such a way that we derive maximum lasting value is very much appreciated by the NHS.”

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Notes to Editors:

Concentra

Concentra was formed as a response to today's increasingly complex business environments. We partner with clients to deliver innovative products and solutions that grow profit and improve service to customers. We combine our core strengths of business consulting, data analysis and technology to create easy-to-use tools that work for clients today and tomorrow. <http://www.concentra.co.uk/>  
(<http://www.concentra.co.uk/>)

Development of the Cancer Commissioning Tool (CCT)

Development of the CCT was spearheaded by the National Cancer Action Team (NCAT), supported by funding from the Pharmaceutical Oncology Initiative (POI). The POI was set up in 2005 to identify opportunities to collaborate on projects to benefit cancer patients by improving access to cancer medicines. The POI is an industry partnership that involves 18 plus pharmaceutical companies. NCAT and POI selected the management company A.T. Kearney to assist with the design, scope and functionality of the CCT. The IT Services company Concentra was in turn asked by NCAT to detail the design, development, roll-out, training and support of the final version of the CCT.

#### The Cancer Commissioning Tool features

The CCT has a number of key features highly relevant to help the NHS find better ways of treating cancer:

- It centralises the information needed by NHS managers and makes it easier to look at regularly updated data in one place
- Data on cancer and cancer treatment are presented in an easy to navigate and manipulate graphical manner, making it that much easier to work with key variables
- Managers can look at the differences in groups of information in order to benchmark their organisation's performance relative to others across the NHS
- Data is accessible via a level of detail hierarchies, supporting analysis at very high or very detailed levels (from, for instance, a very global "dashboard" view of central cancer variables at a PCT or cancer network level or local data on length of patient treatment)

In addition, the Toolkit enables its users to:

- Extract, download and display any data they see in a chart and want to explore and manipulate further
- Work with their preferred settings on the CCT, so they can work with the system the way they want to, such as navigating to the sections most relevant to them or working with information via the 'view' most useful for their specific needs
- Generate quickly and easily a range of reports with selected contents, guidance and charts from different sections of the Toolkit